



OFFICE OF THE
WATER DEPARTMENT
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Water Commission Minutes
Wednesday, April 6, 2022

Approved: 5/18/22

John O'Brien called the meeting to order at 6:18 pm
Other member(s) present: Mat Morton
Meeting held: At the Dunstable Town Hall, 511 Main Street, lower level
In attendance:

Reviewed & Signed:

- All Bills Outstanding Since Last Meeting
- All Payroll Outstanding Since Last Meeting

Department Operations Update

Mr. O'Brien reported that meter readings are occurring and the spring billing is in process. There were then some questions on billing. Some ratepayers appear to have overpaid. Mr. Voelker responded that he'd talked to Ms. Bresnick and she explained that some ratepayers appear to be dealing with the rate increases by budgeting differently and paying more. Mr. Morton noted a few instances where it looks like the ratepayer may have simply rounded up as the overpayment was small like .99 cents. Mr. O'Brien then asked about the prospects for Affordable Housing. Mr. Voelker responded by outlining the current circumstance. The latest RFP also had only one response, but it came in after the deadline. So the Interim Town Administrator intends to re-do the process. This will include re-advertising. Discussion then shifted to the Town Center District and the early attempts of the owner of 493 Main Street to utilize the district to add two apartments by restoring and renovating the barn on the property. The barn presently is in bad shape and likely beyond restoration to its former usage. But the façade might be preserved and the building renovated and repurposed. The main issue there is whether there is sufficient parking and how a commercial use of the first floor, as required by the Town Center Overlay District, would work. The matter is currently in front of Planning Board which would have to issue a Special Permit in order for anything to go forward. There is also talk of utilizing the Town Center Overlay District provisions in relation to 11 Pleasant Street as well. But that hasn't come before Planning Board. Mr. Voelker then briefly reported on the PFAS issue that's arisen for Groton-Dunstable Regional High School. DEP is currently working with the administration to get a filtration system in place. That said DEP has assured that all testing to date shows no PFAS in the Dunstable public water system and they have repeatedly assured that since the Water Infrastructure Project was completed they are pleased with the state of the towns water system.

Town of Pepperell Water Operator Services Review

Mr. O'Brien reported that things are still going smoothly. There have been no complaints to date and Pepperell's Water Division appears to be operating things smoothly. Mr. O'Brien expressed the continuing concern that we still don't have an inter-municipal agreement with Pepperell for their services. An agreement would provide us protection from any abrupt discontinuation of services among other things. Mr. Voelker reminded that they have had to hire additional staffing in order to cover Dunstable and any abrupt termination of services would present issues and costs for them.

Still, he concurred that the preference would be for a formal agreement to be signed. Mr. O'Brien noted that one of the things to address once that's done is the question of switching to a quarterly billing cycle as some ratepayers have requested. Although he wasn't sure of the utility of it, he understood how it might work better for some people's budgeting process. The idea continues to hold merit, but neither Mr. Morton nor Mr. O'Brien were prepared to push for such a change at this time. Until we have Pepperell in a formal agreement, it's too risky to request something that could essentially double some of the work they do for us. But certainly it's something that could be discussed with them once things are more formalized. Discussion then concluded with Mr. Voelker reporting that Ms. Bresnick has worked well with Pepperell's Water Division and things appear to be positive all around. Pepperell has some great employees who truly care about their work.

Next Meeting/Regular Meetings

The next meeting is expected to be scheduled for the start of May or perhaps the midpoint. The consensus date was May 18.

Authorization of Accounts Payable & Payroll

The Commission considered and signed off on all of its outstanding bills. The Commission then reviewed and approved payment of the bills and also signed all outstanding department payroll. Mr. O'Brien then briefly reported on all bills he'd reviewed and approved since the last meeting in his capacity as chair. He noted these are the usual ones, utilities, alarm, and the like.

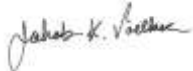
Minutes

The Commission considered the minutes from its meeting held on March 3, 2022. Seeing no reason to modify the minutes the Commission determined to accept the minute.

A motion was made by Mr. O'Brien to approve the minutes of March 3, 2022 as written. The motion was seconded by Mr. Morton and passed by majority vote.

A motion to adjourn was made by Mr. Morton at 7:00 pm. The motion was seconded by Mr. O'Brien and passed by majority vote.

Respectfully submitted by



Jakob K. Voelker
Administrative Assistant, Dunstable Water Department